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ABSTRACT

"Active Citizenship Today" (ACT) is a service learning program for the social studies. There are two things that make ACT different from other service learning programs: (1) the "learning" in service -- learning refers to traditional social studies content and skills (it is a civics model); and (2) ACT is built around a problem-solving framework. This guide is the result of 5 years of the ACT program and represents a synthesis of what participants have experienced in implementing ACT. The guide is built around the following questions: (1) "What Is ACT?"; (2) "Why Use ACT?"; (3) "What Does ACT Look Like?"; (4) "Where -- and How -- Do I Begin?"; (5) "How Do I Keep ACT Alive?"; (6) "How Do I Stir Up Interest?"; (7) "What Is the Role of the Community?"; (8) "The ACT Program Coordinator -- What's the Big Deal?"; (9) "How Do I Evaluate ACT?"; and (10) "What Resources Are Available?" (BT)

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ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP TODAY

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IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT SERVICE LEARNING

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Active Citizeship Today
Implementation Guide

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INTRODUCTION

What! Another implementation guide? Why? How is this guide different from all other guides? What new advice do we have to offer that hasn't been offered before?

Good questions.

After five years of putting theory into practice, we have learned a thing or two about what makes service learning and the Active Citizenship Today (ACT) program take hold in a school district. We'd like to give you the benefit of what we have learned.° To that end, we have tried to distill the vast sea of recorded and remembered information that we have accumulated in the process of jumpstarting the ACT adventure.

We did not want to rely on our experience alone. Thousands of individuals have participated in the ACT program. We wanted to benefit from their observations as well. We spoke with dozens of teachers, administrators, district coordinators, community members and students. We asked each of them the same questions: Based upon your experiences implementing ACT, what advice would you give to a new district? What strategies work? What strategies don't work?

This guide is a synthesis of what people told us and our own experiences implementing ACT. We hope you find it useful. Nobody wants to reinvent the wheel.

° **Note:** Although this guide is directed primarily at administrators of district-wide or school-wide programs, teachers and others may find it useful as well. In addition, while some of the suggestions in this implementation guide are specific to the ACT program, many will be useful to anyone developing a service-learning program.

Question One: What is ACT?

Simply put, ACT is a service-learning program for the social studies. Service learning is a teaching strategy that links the skills and knowledge students learn in the classroom to problems they find in their community. As students work on projects, they form relationships with community organizations. As an ongoing part of the process, students frequently reflect on what they have learned about themselves, their community, and the problems they are seeking to address. In this way, students develop a sense of caring for others and a better understanding of their role as active members of a community.

There are two things that make ACT different from other service-learning programs. First, the *learning* in service learning refers to traditional social studies content and skills—it is a civics model. While of value to other disciplines, ACT has special application to the domain of social studies. In a government course, for example, ACT offers a hands-on approach to learning about political issues, government, and policy as they are manifested at the local level. In a history class, students can apply the ACT Framework to another society or culture—past or present—and through analogy find equivalent issues in their own community. A similar approach can be applied to geography when contemporary countries or regions are being studied.

The second thing that makes ACT different is that it is built around a problem-solving framework. By addressing each segment of the ACT Framework, students develop a deeper understanding of the community in which they live, the problems communities face, and the ways in which the problems can be addressed. They come to see themselves as active citizens, capable of making informed choices at the polls, of participating in the political process, or working as individuals or in groups to improve the community. They develop the communication, research and critical-thinking skills necessary to create positive change in the community or in the workplace. Finally, by linking the lessons of the classroom to the real-world laboratory of the community, students can see the relevance of education and the practicality of making a greater commitment to learning.

THE ACT FRAMEWORK

To link an in-depth study of civics with active community involvement, ACT students go through five units of study:

1. Defining and Assessing Your Community
2. Choosing and Researching a Problem
3. Examining Policy
4. Exploring Options
5. Taking Action

The *Active Citizenship Today Handbook for Teachers* explores each unit with a variety of lesson plans, teaching strategies, and general hints. Designed to be used in conjunction with the *ACT Handbook for Teachers*, the *ACT Field Guide* provides students with methods, tips, examples, and a project planning guide that will help them get the most out of each unit of their ACT adventure.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP TODAY FRAMEWORK

(Middle School)	(High School)
LOOKING AT YOUR COMMUNITY ***Where do you live?***	**DEFINING AND ASSESSING YOUR COMMUNITY** ***What is your community?***
FOCUSING ON AN ISSUE ***What's the problem?***	**CHOOSING AND RESEARCHING A PROBLEM** ***What is the problem?***
SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS ***Who's doing what?***	**EXAMINING POLICY** ***What is it? Who makes it? Does it work?***
EXPLORING OPTIONS ***What can you do?***	**EXPLORING OPTIONS** ***What can you do?***
TAKING ACTION ***What will you do?***	**TAKING ACTION** ***What will you do?***

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Question Two: Why Use ACT?

ACT is a service-learning program. Service learning is a teaching strategy that combines student service (civic participation) with curriculum and instruction.

Student Service. Educators nationwide are encouraging students to participate in some form of community service. The rationale for student service varies. Some educators believe service improves students' sense of self-worth. Others cite studies that demonstrate a link between service and a decline in at-risk behaviors. Many believe that service provides students with skills and attitudes they will need in the workplace. Finally, a growing number of adults believe that the talents and opinions of young people are valuable resources that should be made available to the community.

Curriculum Enhancement. ACT allows students to address community issues they care about by applying the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they acquire in the classroom. Curriculum and instruction become more relevant to students when they can apply what they have learned to their own lives and the well-being of their community. This application of curriculum to service distinguishes service learning from community service or volunteerism.

ACT was designed to strengthen and support state and district social studies goals. Although teachers have applied ACT to a variety of disciplines, the ACT materials focus on the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of citizenship. They draw largely upon the curriculum of civics, history, and economics to help students assess and address community problems. In short, ACT materials enable students to begin to act as effective citizens in their community.

Goals and Projected Student Outcomes

Goals: Through participation in **Active Citizenship Today**, students will:

- Learn about their community and the people, processes, and institutions that are most effective in improving community conditions.
- Develop the social, political, and analytical skills necessary to effectively participate in the policy-making process at any level of political and community life.
- Foster within themselves and among their peers attitudes regarding the value of lifelong service for the common good.

Student Outcomes: In achieving the goals stated above, students who participate in ACT will be better able to attain the following educational outcomes:

Knowledge

Students will:

- Recognize the variety of characteristics and actions of effective, participating citizens.
- Identify and describe the community in which they live.
- Identify, define, and describe local problems and their connection to problems on the state and national levels.
- Explain the factors and institutions that influence the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of public policy.
- Know the variety of ways an individual can help solve community problems.

(Continued on page 8)

Goals and Projected Student Outcomes (Continued)

Skills

Students will:

- Develop and use effective questions.
- Acquire and comprehend information from multiple primary and secondary sources.
- Process and evaluate information for objectivity, accuracy, and point of view.
- Apply information to effective efforts to help solve social problems.
- Assess the consequences of and appropriate context for personal action.
- Develop and use critical-thinking skills and ethical reasoning to make informed and responsible decisions.
- Develop and use verbal and written communication skills to convey ideas, facts, and opinions in an effective and reasonable manner.
- Work cooperatively with others.
- Effectively advocate individual and shared interests.

Attitudes

Students will:

- Recognize and respect human diversity.
- Develop a sense of personal and political efficacy in the role of community advocate.
- Believe that individual rights and freedoms are balanced by responsibilities.
- Foster within themselves the value of service and the importance of continued involvement in the community.

Question Three: What does ACT look like?

ACT programs vary tremendously from place to place. ACT is flexible. It is designed to address the specific needs of any school district in any community. Different schools, teachers, and students find different ways to deal with the challenges of classroom integration and project planning.

We have included a few ACT Project Profiles, some from high schools, some from middle schools. They are not models for other projects as much as they are examples of how far an ACT classroom can reach into the community and still connect to teachers' curricular objectives. In the projects described below, students developed critical-thinking, communication, and citizenship skills. For example, in one project, students applied organizing and outreach skills to lobby for street lighting. In another project, students applied critical-thinking, technological, and communication skills to plan and implement a historical profile of a community.

In addition, these profiles demonstrate how specific projects can meet content objectives. For example, studying the history of a neighborhood teaches students about the process of collecting and presenting historical data. Organizing a debate on gun control teaches students about the Second Amendment. Lobbying for better street lighting teaches students about the structure and processes of local government.

In many instances, what students learn extends beyond the planned objectives of the curriculum. For example, in Omaha, Nebraska, students who set out to measure the impact of negative stereotypes discovered unexpected cultural and historical dimensions to their neighborhood.

ACT Project Profile: Students Work with Community Members, Local Government, and Business to Light Up Residential Neighborhood.

High School, Social Studies

JEFFERSON COUNTY, COLORADO—A classroom full of ACT students in Jefferson County discovered that a busy residential street posed hazards because it didn't have street lights. Residents and the homeowner's association agreed that lights were badly needed, but the county did not have the money to install them. Students contacted the developer

who built the houses in the area. He offered to put up half the money for street lights. The project needed approval from county government. The students got a county okay in two weeks. Then, accompanied by an adult, students went door-to-door through the neighborhood and raised the other half of the money required to install the lights.

ACT Project Profile: Students Research and Present Neighborhood History

Middle School, Science and Technology

OMAHA, NEBRASKA—Students at McMillan Magnet Center studied the history of 24th Street, the cultural hub of Omaha's African-American community. The students photographed buildings, studied published histories of the area, and collected oral history interviews of citizens who had lived and worked in the famed district.

The project, *Rhythms of 24th Street*, culminated in an exhibit of photographs, oral histories, and a computer module that the students will present at other Omaha schools. The purpose of the project was to offset negative news coverage and an inaccurate perception of the 24th Street community as crime-ridden and dangerous.

ACT Project Profile: Students Take Back the Neighborhood

High School, Social Studies

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI—After studying the problem of violence, ACT students joined with community organizations in an ambitious long-term "Taking Back the Neighborhood Block-by-Block" program. Targeting a 10-block area around their high school, students planned to reduce the crime problems in this neighborhood. Their initial efforts focused on plans for building a community center. To this end, they are organizing a series of fund-raising events. Once in place, the community center will house programs aimed at improving the community.

ACT Project Profile: Students Organize A Debate on Gun Control

High School, Social Studies

JEFFERSON COUNTY, COLORADO—When the Colorado Legislature opened a special session on "Youth and Violence" last September, 500 ninth-graders from Denver's Bear Creek High School were on hand for a kick-off rally. In their government classes, the ninth-graders had been exploring the issue of violence. Teachers and principal alike saw the rally as a special chance for students to see interest groups and individual citi zens expressing their views directly in the political process.

Inspired by the rally, ACT students decided to host a community debate on "Gun Control and the Second Amendment." They created flyers and press releases, invited community speakers, and prepared public service announcements for the local media. "All students had a part, no one was left out," reported one 15-year-old member of the planning committee.

At the event, speakers for and against gun control argued their positions on the Second Amendment to an audience of approximately 300 community members, parents, students, journalists, and local public officials.

As follow-up to the debate, the students invited police officers, judges, lawyers, and public officials to discuss policy issues with peers. "Instead of reading it in a textbook, we experienced the rally, we experienced the debate, and got involved with the community," explained another ninth-grade student. "Through the ACT mode of operations," concluded the teacher who guided the project, "the students enjoyed a hands-on experience unequaled in any textbook. This debate that they designed and carried out will be an experience that they won't soon forget."

ACT Project Profile: Students Wage Campaign Against Illiteracy

Middle School, Language Arts

OMAHA, NEBRASKA—As part of their ACT studies, seventh grade classes decided to work with children and adults on the problem of illiteracy. They selected the problem because they thought that they could do something about it.

Their first step was research. Students invited various community experts to their classroom. A state senator answered questions about how

government was addressing illiteracy. A reporter from the local newspaper talked about the connection between literacy and information. They talked with story-tellers, a teacher of adult education, and a representative from an organization that records books for the blind. Then the students formulated a course of action.

First, they coordinated a book drive at school. The class donated more than 1,000 books to homeless shelters and the local literacy council. They organized a mentoring program with a local elementary school. Here, they read aloud with younger students. They arranged to record themselves reading books on videotape for distribution to elementary schools, a children's hospital, and homeless shelters.

ACT Project Profile: Students Make History Exciting for Younger Children

High School, Social Studies

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI—ACT Students from Murrah High School have teamed up with staff members at Jackson's Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center to create a coloring book on African-American culture and history. Designed to educate elementary school children, the coloring book features drawings, text, games, and puzzles that introduce students to the history of Jackson's African-American community from slave days through the 1930s.

The students who made repeated visits to the Smith Robertson museum, conducted oral history interviews, and pored over community archives. "The purpose was to teach each student that they are the stewards of their heritage, and they must protect it. I wanted them to give something back to the community that they could feel good about," said the economics teacher who was responsible for helping the students organize the project.

"What we've tried to do is combine academic and community work for students to get involved in," said Vernell Lewis, a Murrah High School economics teacher. Museum curator Theresa King said that the most difficult task in developing the coloring book was choosing from the hundreds of excellent drawings submitted by students who participated.

The completed book was printed with funds provided by the local United Way and was distributed free of charge to local elementary schools.

Question Four: Where—And How—Do I Begin?

During the process of putting the ACT program together over the past five years, we have learned a number of critical lessons about how to begin a district- or school-wide ACT program and how to sustain it. Our efforts have not always gone smoothly. Some ideas have worked, others haven't. Through this process we have gleaned a number of important lessons.

1. **Think long-term.** Perhaps the most important lesson to emerge from the ACT experience is to think long-term. Educators who have worked on ACT tell us that effective reforms take years to fully integrate into a district or school. As you plan your program, establish your long-term goals early on. Be sure to include benchmarks to evaluate your progress. Be realistic.

2. **Go with people who love the idea.** Start with a few teachers, administrators, and community people who are enthusiastic about service learning and the ACT approach. Find teachers who already use interactive techniques, who bring community members into their classrooms, and who are active in the community. Look for administrators who support cooperative learning and active classrooms. Seek out community members who want to work with students. Find businesses who encourage their employees to volunteer in the community. Community members outside the school can be your cheerleaders, your think tank, and your promoters. Choose your allies carefully: You will want to build from a strong base, but the base does not have to be large.

3. **Find someone to coordinate resources.** By definition, ACT brings together disparate groups inside and outside of school. Busy educators rarely communicate beyond their own departments. Government officials, parents, and members of the business community all have separate lives to live. Teachers who live outside the school district may not be aware of available resources. This is the job of the project coordinator.

   Note: The project coordinator is a vital player in the ACT adventure. We have devoted a separate section to discuss the role and tasks of the coordinator. (Please see **Question Eight: The ACT Program Coordinator— What's the Big Deal?**, page 26.)

4. **Start Small.** Start with a few projects that are simple and realistic. Build on their success and keep adding new elements. For example, you might want to include more community members the second time around or get your students to conduct more complex research.

   One very enthusiastic teacher in Omaha dove headlong into ACT. Determined to do ACT "correctly," she allowed her students to select the issue and project. Before she knew it, several projects were exploding simultaneously in different directions. The next year she and her students selected one issue—crime. Small groups of students still pursued different projects, but they all focused on crime, allowing for shared labor, information, and overlapping resources.

5. **Incorporate ongoing staff development.** There is a learning curve in ACT. Teachers need time to learn how to incorporate ACT into their curriculum. A staff development plan can provide cooperative learning opportunities for teachers. They need to practice, observe, and regroup to reflect on what they have done. Make it clear from the beginning that there will be time set aside for teachers, community members, and administrators to talk about service-learning projects, identify needs, and generally move the program forward.

6. **Provide examples of simple, easy-to-do projects.** It's not always easy to come up with innovative project ideas, especially at first. Provide as many project examples or models as possible. Teachers should be encouraged to take an existing idea and make it their own. Include some simple models. If you offer only sophisticated project examples, you run the risk of turning teachers and students off.

7. **Define what you mean by "success."** What does a successful ACT project look like? What does a successful ACT district look like? These questions should be addressed early on by your core of committed teachers, administrators, and community members. Measure your progress frequently. You want to be moving noticeably toward your goals. These may differ. For some teachers, success might mean bringing in community resource people. For others it might mean making the classroom more interactive. Both are successes in terms of establishing service learning in your school.

8. **Identify the strengths of your district.** Build on the existing strengths, concerns, and goals of your school and community. Is your district concerned about authentic learning and assessment? Is your district rethinking its social studies framework? Does your district

work with community-based organizations? Interacting creatively with existing programs and initiatives can also help you leverage funds for program development.

9. **Get support from the top.** ACT programs can be noisy and even controversial. Make sure that your superintendent, curriculum heads, and principal are involved from the start. Early administrative buy-in will give teachers the assurance they need to take risks.

10. **You can't fit a square peg into a round hole.** ACT is not for all teachers. If a teacher doesn't seem interested in ACT or service learning, don't try to become a missionary. Move toward people who show the greatest interest.

11. **Provide flexible, high-quality materials.** Teachers are busy people. The more effort they must make to implement a new program, the less likely they are to continue its use. Teachers do not have time to develop materials or write lesson plans. ACT lesson plans and student materials allow teachers to modify curriculum and materials to suit their own needs.

Question Five: How do I keep ACT alive?

Once you have gotten ACT off the ground, a new challenge emerges. Keeping a program going can be tough work. It is important to remember that each district and school is unique. Although no formula will apply to everyone, here are a few tips on keeping ACT alive:

1. **Develop a strong trainer-of-trainer (TOT) model.** Teachers listen to other teachers. They have credibility that many of us in the field do not have simply because we aren't in the classroom day after day. Questions like—Where precisely do you incorporate ACT into the curriculum? How long should the projects last? When do you schedule ACT? These questions can make or break an ACT program.

   Programs can fail when they do not systematically develop the capacity of teachers to train and assist other teachers. Start with a small number and build little by little each year. Your trainers will appreciate the opportunity to assess and develop effective programs. New ACT teachers will benefit from the experience these trainers accrue.

2. **Celebrate success.** Build recognition into your ACT program in small and big ways. Make sure that you involve everyone—students, community members, parents, and administrators. When students complete a project, let others in the school know about it. At the end of the school year, hold a school- or district-wide event that celebrates the year's ACT achievements.

3. **Publicize, publicize, and publicize some more.** Identify press people in your community who will write stories about ACT projects. If students are planning a community project that requires volunteers, use your publicity "machine" to attract volunteers from the community. Have students write press releases and PSAs about upcoming events, achievements, and the impact of their projects.

4. **Keep copies of everything.** Keep a school and district file on projects, lessons plans, community resources, press clippings, flyers, and everything else you can think of. A positive paper trail of your work provides a critical component of any funding effort, legitimizes service learning for a school board or city council, and develops a useful institutional history of your efforts.

5. **Keep your "think tank" involved.** Make sure that you keep your most committed people involved. Continuity is key to maintaining outside interest in ACT. Some districts have chosen a formal council as a way of keeping people involved; others started with a council and currently keep the key players involved via phone, fax, mail, and meetings.

6. **Ongoing reflection.** This is something we promote in service learning projects but rarely do ourselves. There needs to be a time at the beginning and end of each school year when we assess the project. What have we accomplished? Did we meet our goals? What does our completed work suggest for service-learning efforts in the next year? How should our long-term and short-term goals differ? Should we change our course? In Omaha, middle school teachers responded quickly and enthusiastically to ACT. After reflecting on their progress, ACT proponents decided to concentrate on the middle schools rather than trying to develop new programs in high school.

7. **Create collegial support systems.** Bring together teachers from the district every month or two to discuss their ACT projects and identify problem areas. Many teachers feel isolated in their schools and need to feel that they are a part of a larger movement. In most ACT districts, teachers met after school two or three times a year. As a result of these meetings, many teachers began working together on shared problems, goals, and projects. Remember to always provide food.

8. **Keep copies of student work.** One strategy for winning over new teachers is to show them student work from ACT programs and projects. Teachers need to know whether their students will improve their skills through ACT. What better way of demonstrating this than to show them actual work students have completed?

9. **Ongoing evaluation.** How is your program growing? Evaluation needs to take place on several levels. Maintain accurate records of which teachers are doing ACT projects and the number of students they are reaching. Identify simple evaluation methods (surveys, pre- and post tests) that are easy to administer and don't take too much teacher time. Contact a local college or university to find students willing to help with the evaluation. Keep it simple. Use what's already out there in the field. (For more about evaluation and assessment, see **Question Nine: How Do I Evaluate ACT?**, page 29.)

10. Link to other educational reform initiatives. A number of reform initiatives may be taking place simultaneously in a district. While service learning—and ACT—cannot be all things to all people, it has much in common with other efforts at educational reform. Service learning has been used to support school-to-work and character education programs. It has been linked to authentic assessment and used to help students meet high standards. Service learning has been successful with the gifted and talented. It is an appropriate strategy with mixed-ability, Title I, ESL and other special-needs students. Find the goals, strategies, or outcomes you have in common with other educators and pool your resources.

Question Six: How do I Stir Up Interest?

School administrators often move from district to district. They often bring their own pet projects and personnel with them. School board priorities also change. This influx of new agendas can create problems with the continuity of your ACT program. In the interests of keeping your service-learning program alive, it is important to build ACT into as many different layers of the district and community as possible.

Staff and administration "ownership" of your civic participation program will help strengthen commitment to its long-term success. Here are a few suggestions for creating and continuing ACT interest:

1. **Keep administrators informed of your progress.** Student presentations and teacher testimonies can add depth and relevance to reports or meetings. Or, supply administrators with simple program documentation: ACT newsletters, student project reports and reflections, teacher memos, and other copies of relevant correspondence remind busy administrators that something is happening.
2. **Recruit broadcast time.** Ask school administrators to inform their peers about the benefits of school-based community service.
3. **Solicit advice.** Encourage students to utilize school administrators as a resource for project research, planning, and implementation.
4. **Solidify school and community relations.** Ask the school administration to establish a public relations unit for contact between school and community. Teachers and students should seek coverage in school and community papers. Inform parents of civic participation projects as their children develop them.
5. **Define active administrator roles.** Find hands-on ways for the administration to take part in ACT projects. Depending on the administrator, you can a) invite administrators to work on student action projects or b) limit your task suggestions within the scope of his/her normal job responsibilities.

The Principal's Role

Principals play a central role in the success of the program. They must demonstrate their belief in and support of the program. The principal can help legitimize service learning and civic participation by:

- Serving as the initial liaison to parents and the community.
- Encouraging teachers to integrate service into their curriculum.
- Providing logistical support, e.g., transportation.
- Allowing teachers to visit civic participation programs in other schools.
- Lobbying for support from the district office.

The Superintendent's Role

The school administration will look to the superintendent to validate program efforts. The superintendent can show support by:

- Giving encouragement to planning committees.
- Recommending board policy that supports service learning efforts.
- Serving as liaison/advocate between the ACT program, the school board, and community groups.
- Suggesting ways to include service in existing programs.
- Integrating civic participation and district goals.
- Providing public relations focus for the program.

The School Board's Role

The school board can endorse civic participation as an important component of local education goals. It can promote collaboration between the school district, local businesses, community agencies, and colleges to form civic participation partnerships. The school board can also:

- Provide staff development programs for teachers and community members.
- Secure liability coverage and transportation for students.
- Provide additional classroom support through budget allocations or recruitment of volunteers from the community.

Note: Administrators and the school board should congratulate students and teachers for civic participation, but someone should also congratulate the congratulators. Appreciation from students, teachers, and program coordinators is always well-received by administrators. Acknowledgement from the community builds positive public relations for your service-learning program with school administrators.

School administrators can:

- Encourage and support team teaching and interdisciplinary instructional methods.
- Provide flexible class schedules for civic participation programs.
- Recognize and support teachers who implement civic participation.
- Lobby for civic participation in teacher training and give teacher candidates experience with civic participation.
- Grant teachers release time to attend staff development programs and workshops on civic participation.
- Assist in the recruitment of parent and community volunteers to help teachers with service-related activities.

The Parents' Role

Parents usually support programs they understand and believe are effective. Parents will want to know how their children will benefit from a civic participation program. Suggest to parents that their children will develop valuable learning, citizenship, and career skills while they address school and community problems. Below are some strategies for involving parents:

- Establish a core group of interested parents.
- Keep parents informed through phone trees, flyers, a newsletter, and local newspapers.
- Involve parents in planning, implementing, and evaluating service projects.
- Give parents ways to help their children focus on projects most appropriate for their needs and interests.

- Respect the concerns of parents who might not want their children placed with certain agencies who hold values with which the parents disagree.
- Be sensitive to parents who express concerns about safety.

Most important, welcome parent involvement. Parents can be of substantial assistance to your civic participation program and they can lead you to other community members who can provide you with valuable support. .

Question Seven: What Is the Role of the Community?

Effective service learning depends upon school and community collaboration. Students, teachers, and informed community members need to develop collaborative approaches that connect service learning in the classroom with local government, concerned businesses, and non-profit, community-based organizations.

Three Roles Community Members Can Play

Agencies, organizations, and individuals representing local government, the business community, the nonprofit community, and the media can become involved in service learning in three interconnected ways. First, they can provide additional support outside the school system. Second, they can supply information, experience, and resources to help students understand community issues and problems. Third, they can put forth project ideas that have real relevance for the community.

1. **Generating support outside the school system.**

   In every community there are leaders who can make things happen. Some of these people are public figures; others are not. You will need to do a bit of research to find out who these people are. In any event, it's important to bring them on board as early as possible so that your program has credibility from the get-go.

   Find community people who can be helpful to the project. Think of people who are considered leaders in the community, people who represent larger numbers of people, e.g., director of the United Way or Chamber of Commerce, and people who believe in the potential of youth.

   Personally contact each targeted community member. Prepare an introductory packet that describes how the program benefits young people, their academic goals, the school, and the community.

   Be prepared to talk about what you expect from them. If you are interested in including them in a formal structure, think about the number of meetings required and the purpose of the meetings. Work with each person to carve out a special niche that does not add additional burdens. Adhere to the KISS ("keep it short and simple")

principle. Ask them about their time constraints. Ask for a one-year commitment.

Leave with a clear understanding of what you expect from them and with a clear idea of what the next steps will be. Always follow up with a letter that describes what you have decided together.

Meet only when necessary and when there is a clear reason. Keep the meetings short and sweet. A good time is over lunch.

Keep them informed about what is going on with the project. You could do this through a monthly newsletter that describes projects.

Try to get them involved in program activities at least once during the year. Make sure they meet at least some of the students who are involved with the program.

2. Community as Resource

The community is a rich source of information on a variety of social issues. Non-profit service agencies, advocacy groups, the media, and government offices are full of statistics, articles, books, and experts informed on issues in the community. Why start from scratch?

Find out what resource lists already exist in your community. The Chamber of Commerce, the United Way or Volunteer Centers, and local elected officials usually have a listing of organizations, what they do, and what they can provide. Pull them together.

Attend meetings where you can address community members to explain the purpose of the program and describe how they can get involved. For those interested, schedule orientation events.

An effective orientation event brings together teachers, students, and interested community members from each of our four domains (business, government, non-profits, and the media). It provides them with the opportunity to discuss ways in which they can collaborate on community problems, what resources each group brings to the table, and what problems they anticipate. You might consider organizing this meeting around a discussion of the ACT framework. Ask, for example, how can the domains assist students in exploring their community or researching a community problem.

Set up your own community resource network. This network should

be designed to gather information that you, your teachers, and students will need to conduct service-learning projects. This should be ongoing. As teachers, students, and community members accumulate additional resources, they should be added to this network. You will need to set up a procedure for updating this information.

3. Community as a Source for Service Projects

Community members can help identify potential student projects. There is no reason to replicate service projects that already exist or to establish service projects that do not address a community need. Community collaboration in this area is key.

Bring together a focus group of service agency representatives (the Volunteer Center or United Way can help you put this together), to discuss how service organizations can get involved with students. This discussion should explore a) administrative and practical issues, such as liability, insurance, supervision, number of students, and b) programmatic issues, such as how agencies can utilize the skills and talents of students to meet real community needs. Ask members of this group to become your service-learning ambassadors.

Based on this discussion, prepare a mailing to key agencies. Don't mail to everyone. Start small with agencies who have been recommended to you. Follow up with a phone call or visit. Enter the data from these discussions into your resource network (See "Community as Resource," page 24).

As teachers, students, and agency people refer you to more agencies and service opportunities, you will need to respond. Covering an extensive community support group takes time and energy. Check your local colleges. They may have a work-study or internship program to provide you with help. Focus your intern search on social-work, education, and public-policy programs.

Offer a service-learning training. Involve the people in your initial focus group to put the training together. The training can introduce the agencies to service learning, create a network of agencies, and address common problems. This could be a "cookie cutter" training offered every six months.

Question Eight: The ACT Program Coordinator—What's the Big Deal?

We have devoted a whole section of the ACT Implementation Guide to a discussion of the ACT Program Coordinator. The reason is simple: The character, energy, experience, and abilities of the program coordinator are critical to the success of ACT. This is particularly true for the first three to five years, when the program is getting up and running.

What should we look for?

1. **Look for a teacher. . .** Teachers (or former teachers) often make excellent program coordinators. The coordinator works constantly with teachers. It is important that teachers and the coordinator trust each other. A good coordinator can sympathize with a teacher who has 40 students in a classroom or who is skeptical about prospects for school reform. Try to find a teacher who has recently taught in the district—someone who knows the territory and its people.
2. **Who understands the school district. . .** The coordinator needs to build support for service learning at the district level. In order to accomplish this goal, it helps to know the policies, administrative procedures, reform efforts, and general goals of the district.
3. **Who understands community. . .** The coordinator should understand how the community works (or be willing to learn). To make your service-learning program accessible to the community, the program coordinator will have to reach out to groups and individuals from government, business, non-profit organizations, and the media. This means attending tons of meetings and making the coordinator and the program known outside of the school walls. No easy task.
4. **Is outgoing. . .** You need a person who isn't shy. Much of the work of the coordinator is promotional. The coordinator needs to be able to "pitch" service learning and the ACT program as the hottest thing since sliced bread. They need to be able to approach everyone from teachers to law enforcement officers, from business people to bus drivers.
5. **And loves the idea.** More than anything else, the coordinator must believe in service learning and the ACT program. The coordinator needs to see service learning as a good thing for kids, teachers, and the community. The coordinator must be excited by what the kids are

doing, how the teachers are growing professionally, and this must show. Nothing sells a service-learning program like passion.

What does the coordinator do?

An ACT program coordinator. . .

1. **Creates a bridge between the classroom and community.** Schools and community are often separated by a number of long-established factors. Many teachers do not live in the communities where they teach. Community members are often unaware of school and classroom realities. Even parents must make an extra effort to participate actively in their children's formal education. The ACT coordinator needs to bridge the gap between the disparate interests of school, local government, business, and community members. They should recognize that there is a learning curve for all parties involved in school and community efforts. Give this getting-acquainted process time. The coordinator should work with each group until they begin to work with each other, then work to keep the whole process moving forward.

2. **Provides examples of successful service-learning efforts.** At the beginning, the coordinator should expect to suggest simple ACT projects that will build to combine the energies of teachers, students, and community members. In time, these projects will come directly from the teachers and students themselves, but they may need some inspiration and guidance in the beginning.

3. **Creates a resource guide.** Teachers need to be able to identify effective community groups or resource people who can provide information and support about community issues. As teachers and coordinators find groups and individuals who can assist with service-learning efforts, the coordinator can pool community resources in a central file and offer it to all service-learning participants as a shared asset.

4. **Develops school and community radar.** Many ACT coordinators report that they are constantly scanning the community for problems and resources that could be addressed by service-learning projects. Some even admit that they dream about community problems. Scan the local news. You might be surprised at how many issues could be addressed with a service-learning project.

5. **Organizes staff development.** The coordinator should be able to identify areas in which teachers are having a difficult time

implementing ACT. Do they need help in project planning? Curriculum integration? Finding community resources? The coordinator can identify these problem and organize workshops to help teachers address needs in these areas.

6. **Facilitates collegial support groups.** ACT requires time for teachers to share ideas and concerns. What is working? What isn't? This is most effectively done through informal meetings. Food and drink can become great equalizers.

7. **Keeps district and school administrators up-to-date and in the loop.** Teachers cannot operate a successful service-learning program unless they have the support of their administrators. On one hand, administrators need to be kept informed about service-learning activities. On the other hand, teachers may need to have administrators kept off their backs. The job of the coordinator is to engage administrators in a service-learning program without interfering with a teacher's efforts at integrating service learning into his/her classroom.

8. **Establishes links with state-wide networks.** Money and resources for service-learning programs are available through the department of education in most states. There are also local foundations that might provide assistance to teachers. Businesses in communities are often happy to donate resources, human and otherwise. The coordinator is the best person to scout these opportunities and resources and follow them up.

9. **Profiles and presents the program.** It is wise to remind administrators and community people in government, business, non-profits, and the media that ACT is up and running. Publicity is important. Develop contacts with local newspapers, radio, and television. Use public service announcements (PSAs) to inform the community of upcoming events. Use ACT teachers and students in this effort. Scheduling recognition and culmination events that are open to the community can be effective in establishing a high service-learning profile in the school and community. These events also provide added opportunities for students to apply service-learning skills to outreach.

10. **Travels.** The coordinator should be willing and able to travel freely from school to school within a district, disseminating information about the nuts and bolts of ACT. Frequent personal appearances at community organizations can also demand mobility.

Question Nine: How Do I Evaluate ACT?

By Alan Melchior and Larry Bailis

Service learning is flowering at a time when resources for schools are getting tighter and tighter. Demands are increasing for programs to demonstrate their effectiveness. Numerous case studies document service-learning *potential.* But case studies do not demonstrate that service learning in *your* class, *your* school, and *your* school district is succeeding and that it is a worthwhile investment of scarce teacher time and resources. Only a careful evaluation of service learning programs can do this.

Evaluation can also help program management—learning about what is working or not working and gathering the information needed to continuously improve your program. Evaluation in this sense is a form of reflection (a critical service-learning activity) that takes place at the program level. It is a means of "fine tuning" what you do, and of identifying problems before they grow. For many practitioners, this is the function of evaluation that is most directly useful. If you are going to spend the time and effort needed to collect good information, you want to be able to use it to help improve your program.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide some helpful hints to teachers and administrators who want to evaluate their service-learning programs.

Where Do I Start?

For a teacher or administrator looking to evaluate a service-learning program, there are four critical starting points: (1) defining your goals, (2) clarifying your expectations, (3) looking at the information you already collect, and (4) documenting what you do.

Defining Your Goals

Before you can evaluate your program, you must know what you want to achieve. What are your program's goals? For most service-learning programs, these goals fall into several broad domains:

Participant Goals. Most service-learning programs focus on student participant goals. In general, these goals fall into three broad areas:

- **Civic development**, such as increasing understanding of or commitment to the community;

- **Academic achievement**, such as improving school engagement and attendance, basic and critical-thinking skills, or ability to apply course content to the "real world."
- **Personal** or **social development**, such as improving self-esteem, personal responsibility, career awareness, or social skills.

Institutional Goals. A broader set of goals affects your school or school system. They might include increased use of hands-on or project-based learning strategies or an improved school climate (through student engagement).

Community Goals. Service learning is also intended to meet real community needs. Community goals generally start with the delivery of specific services (for example, building a playground or providing X number of hours of service). But community goals may also include more indirect objectives, such as an improved relationship between the school and local social service agencies or an improved image of the schools and youth in the community.

In each of these broad domains, you first need to think carefully and as specifically as possible about what your program is intended to achieve. Is the primary focus on citizenship? Academic achievement? Social or personal development? Are you primarily concerned with institutional or community impacts as the major measure of success? If the primary goal is citizenship, what exactly do you mean: Knowledge of community issues? Interest in volunteering? Would you consider your effort successful if students increased their knowledge of the community, but did not increase the number of hours they volunteered in the community?

After listing goals, you will need to **rank** them. Efforts to assess progress can easily become bogged down unless they are focused on a limited number of goals that represent the highest priorities.

After listing and ranking goals, it is then necessary to figure out how to **measure progress** toward achievement of the goals. Are grades an acceptable measure of the kinds of academic achievement that you hope to accomplish? Are scores on district-wide or state-wide exams the right kind of measure? Do you think that short-answer surveys on "self-esteem" or "social responsibility" really get at the kinds of subtle changes in student attitudes that your service-learning courses are attempting to promote?

By defining what is to be evaluated, teachers often gain a much clearer view of what they are really trying to accomplish and how to best accomplish them.

Clarifying Your Expectations

Suppose one of your goals is to increase student interest and engagement in school. You decide that attendance rates are a good, easy-to-obtain measure of engagement. Further, suppose your current average daily attendance is about 85 percent. Would you expect that a well-done service learning program would immediately raise this to 100 percent? Probably not! Is it realistic to expect student scores on district-wide social studies tests to rise by 48 percent the first year you implement your service learning curriculum? Not really! Can any new approach to teaching lead to measurable improvements among all students? Not likely!

Given this situation, coming up with realistic expectations should be the heart of any sensible evaluation process. The expectations need to be ambitious enough to drive performance, but not so high that they seem utterly unachievable. This is one of many areas where teams of teachers can benefit from sharing both ideas and experiences.

Looking at Your Information

The third step is to look at the kinds of information you already collect, or could be collecting without much trouble. Much information can be collected on a day-to-day basis for use in evaluation. Some examples include:

Information on service hours. One basic outcome of service learning is to deliver service. You should therefore collect data on service hours. Where students work on individual service assignments, you can ask them to turn in a weekly time sheet (and you can have the site supervisor sign it if you want to verify the hours). Where students work in groups, each group can maintain a record, or you can in the form of an attendance log. In one school that we studied, the students annually performed over 20,000 hours of service—an impressive statistic for a single program.

Student Reflection. Student reflection, particularly written reflection, provides a ready opportunity to evaluate student impacts. Many programs ask students to write a brief essay at the beginning and end of the program. Others ask students directly to assess how they

have changed as a result of their service experience. Students can also evaluate one another as part of the assessment process. In one program where students work in teams, each writes an assessment of the team's operation as part of the formal reflection process.

Student journals, a common reflection tool, are another obvious source of evaluation information. Again, you can ask students to write on a particular set of questions at different points in the year and then you (or perhaps a colleague) can look at whether their perceptions and attitudes have changed (and if so, how).

A similar approach might have students construct formal **portfolios** that include both written reflection on their experience and information on the specific accomplishments that took place through their service (photographs, time sheets, letters of recommendation, etc.). Building a portfolio is a powerful reflective process, one that helps both student and teacher examine the quality of the learning that has taken place.

School Records. Existing school records (attendance, tardiness, grades, discipline referrals, etc.) can cast light on a number of central service-learning goals, including school engagement, academic achievement, and social and personal responsibility. For example, were your community service students absent less this year than their counterparts last year who did *not* do service learning? How do the grades of your students compare to students not engaged in service learning? How do their suspension, tardiness, or graduation rates compare? While you may not have enough students to draw firm statistical conclusions, these kinds of comparisons can point to areas of potential impact.

Parent/Teacher/Student/Site Evaluations. You can put together simple questionnaires for parents, teachers, students, and site supervisors asking *their* view of the program, the attitudes and behavior of the students, the work that has been accomplished, and so forth. These evaluations serve a dual purpose of documenting your program and its impact and of providing ongoing feedback that you can use for program planning and management.

Documenting What You Do

Finally, you need to take some time to describe the program itself—who was in the program, the type of service students performed, the activities that took place in class. If you want to make sense of the program *outcomes* (to decide, for example, whether a disappointing result came from a problem in the program design or from an implementation problem), you must be able to describe what was *done* and compare it with what you had hoped would happen.

Where Can I Get Help?

You do not have to do it all on your own. There are people who can help, both inside and outside your school.

Use students as evaluators. By involving students in designing surveys, keeping records of service hours, or tabulating parent surveys, you can help them learn practical research skills and reinforce their understanding of the program's goals while sharing some of the day-to-day burden of program management.

Team with other teachers. If you are one of several teachers involved in service learning, talk with your colleagues about jointly evaluating your programs. You might want to divide the tasks by function, e.g., one of you designs an evaluation form, someone else tabulates service hours, etc. Or you can use the evaluation process as an opportunity to share ideas and experiences. Thus, you may want to review the essays or portfolios prepared by students in a colleague's classes, and he or she may want to review yours.

Look for a college partner. Program evaluations are often terrific projects for local college faculty and their students. Call the education, political science, or sociology department and ask whether any faculty or students are interested in service-learning and looking for a project.

Program Evaluation Information and Resources. The National Service-Learning Cooperative Clearinghouse at the University of Minnesota has bibliographies of existing evaluations that you can look at for leads, as well as databases of materials, program descriptions, and consultants. Call 1-800-808-SERVE or look on the web: **http://nicsl.coled.umn.edu/**.

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Question Ten: What Resources are Available?

What resources will you have to work with? No program can exist without resources: human, financial, and in-kind donations of equipment and supplies. Survey community resource guides at your school and community to get an idea of the quantity and quality of support that already exists.

Free Materials

Network is a 12-page newsletter published by Constitutional Rights Foundation twice a year. *Network* features articles, book reviews, web site listings, project profiles, conference listings, and other information related to K–12 service learning. Educators may subscribe for free. We welcome your ideas on service learning. Contact Constitutional Rights Foundation, 601 S. Kingsley Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90005.

Violence in America: Activism 2000 Info-Starter by Wendy Schaetzel Lesko, 1993. Prepared for Active Citizenship Today, this 50-page annotated list of information resources identifies more than 250 different federal agencies congressional committees, national organizations, clearinghouses, and publications that focus on violence. *Violence in America* is available on Constitutional Rights Foundation's web site.
URL: **http://www.crf-usa.org**

Teaching Tolerance is a journal directed at K–12 teachers and principals, which is distributed free to educators twice a year. Published by the Southern Poverty Law Center, it emphasizes the "how to" aspects of prejudice reduction. Each issue features articles on approaches, student activities, an idea exchange among teachers, and reviews of teaching tools. Contact Teaching Tolerance, 400 Washington Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36104; fax (205) 264-3121.

"The American Promise"—Last year PBS broadcast this three-hour series telling the stories of more than 200 people—of every age and background—who are working to improve their communities across the nation. The program is a wonderful tool for motivating students to get involved in their communities. The Farmers Insurance Group of Companies is still offering teachers free videotapes of the series and a teacher's guide. Contact: The American Promise, P.O. Box 4989, Los Angeles, CA 90051-9723, (213) 964-8039.

BOOKS

Changing Our World: A Handbook for Young Advocates by Paul Fleisher. Tucson, Arizona. Zephyr Press. Like the *ACT Field Guide*, this is a hands-on guide for high school and middle school students who want to attack community and social problems and are looking for pointers on how to be effective.

The Complete Guide to Learning Through Community Service: Grades K-8 by Lilian S. Stephens. Boston. Allyn & Bacon. Profiles more than 400 projects, which range from projects in single classrooms to school-wide projects to major service-learning initiatives, such as Active Citizenship Today and CityYouth.

The Kid's Guide to Social Action by Barbara A. Lewis. Minneapolis. Free Spirit Publishing. This terrific handbook for taking action in the community gives students of all ages plenty of guidance and examples.

The Kid's Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas For Young People Who Want to Make a Difference by Barbara A. Lewis, edited by Pamela Espeland. Minneapolis. Free Spirit Publishing. More than 500 service ideas—ranging from simple, one-time activities to large-scale projects that involve whole communities.

No Kidding Around! America's Young Activists Are Changing the World and You Can Too by Wendy Schaetzel Lesko. Kensington, Maryland. Information USA, Inc. In this informative and easy-to-read handbook, Lesko offers case studies of young activists and practical advice drawn from her experiences as a journalist and grassroots organizer. She also provides many specific resources.

Service Learning in the Middle School: Building a Culture of Service by Carl I. Fertman, George P. White, Louis J. White. Columbus, Ohio. National Middle School Association. Useful survey of the whys and hows of planning, implementing, and sustaining a service-learning program for middle-school students.

Web Sites

The web site of the **National Service-Learning Cooperative Clearinghouse** has searchable databases on service-learning literature, programs, events, trainers, organizations, and K–12 Learn and Serve America grantees. It has links to service-learning sites elsewhere on the web. You can enter information about your service-learning program, training, or conference, or if you provide training or technical assistance on service learning, you can add your name to its referral database. You can also sign up for its K–12 Listserv, which will keep you in touch via e-mail with service-learning educators across the nation. (The Listserv's archives are also searchable on the web site.)
URL: **http://nicsl.coled.umn.edu/**

Impact Online is a non-profit organization that seeks to facilitate and increase community involvement via the Internet. It is building free resource databases to help people get involved in the community. Using its search page, you can search for non-profit groups by name, category, or by geographical area. You can also see which groups need volunteers. Non-profits can add information to the databases free of charge.
URL: **http://www.impactonline.org**

PBS's **"American Promise,"** the three-part series on taking action in the community, has a terrific web site. Two of its most intriguing areas are the Community Action Guide and the Public Discussion Center. The Action Guide includes 24 different projects, such as replacing graffiti with community murals or keeping guns out of school. When you click on a project, you find details on how someone did it and who to contact for more information. In the Public Discussion Center, there's an area for teachers to discuss how to do different lessons. URL: **http://pbs.org/ap/**

Nonprofit Prophets is an interactive project that challenges groups of students to investigate a problem that they see in the world and then create a World Wide Web Resource page on the Internet that teaches the world about the problem. Students select a topic (a list is provided), research the problem, locate non-profit partners on the web to collaborate with, conduct ongoing communications with professionals in the field, write articles on the problem, design a page, get feedback on the design, and publish a web page.
URL: **http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/prophets/index.html**

Youth in Action Network is an interactive free web site for young people, educators, organization members, and classrooms who want to learn about, and participate in, positive social action and service projects. Youth and educators from around the world come together to learn, communicate, and take action on issues related to topics such as the environment and human rights. The site has information and links to other sites, problem areas, chat areas, and take action tools such as The Media Locator, Petition Maker, Survey Station, Global Citizen Lobbyist, and The Fundraiser. URL: **http://www.mightymedia.com/youth/**

I*EARN (the International Education and Resource Network), a nonprofit organization, helps teachers and young people (K-12) to work together in different parts of the world at low cost through a global telecommunications network. Expanding to additional international sites daily, I*EARN now includes more than 1,000 schools in over 30 countries. Members can join existing structured online projects or work with others internationally to create their own projects.
URL: **http://www.iearn.org/iearn/**

The **Giraffe Project's** web site includes profiles of community heroes, "giraffes," who have stuck their necks out for the common good. You can nominate community heroes. The site also has inspiring news articles and quotes as well as information on the project's K–12 curriculum and its speaker program. URL: **http://www.whidbey.com/giraffe/**

Global SchoolNet Foundation's web site has at least three areas of interest to service-learning educators. Its **Internet Projects Registry** lists projects offered by GSN, other teachers, and other organizations. You can even register your project there. **International Schools CyberFair** is a school-based project in which students learn about their communities by doing research on local leaders, attractions, and businesses and publishing their project findings on the web. **ThinkQuest** is an annual contest for students grade 7–12, who can win up to $25,000 in college scholarships. URL: **http://www.gsn.org**

Constitutional Rights Foundation's web site features the latest issue of *Network*, CRF's service-learning newsletter, a description of CRF programs including Active Citizenship Today and CityYouth, our (two service-learning curriculums) and a catalog of CRF publications.
URL: **http://www.crf-usa.org**

The **Close Up Foundation** has two web sites—one is devoted entirely to service learning. This site contains the ASLER standards for school and community-based service learning, sample curriculum-based projects, information about resources and upcoming conferences, as well as links to other service-learning web sites. It also links to Close-Up's civic education web site. URL: **http://www.closeup.org/servelearn.htm**

GRANTS

Robinson Mini-Grant. Constitutional Rights Foundation's Robinson Mini-Grant Program honors the late Maurice R. Robinson, founder of Scholastic, Inc., a champion of innovative education, and longtime supporter of effective citizenship education. Each year, thanks to a generous grant from The Maurice R. Robinson Fund of New York City, CRF awards mini-grants of up to $1,000 for K-12 service-learning projects designed to address serious community issues. The deadline for application is June of each year. To receive an application, write to Robinson Mini-Grant, Constitutional Rights Foundation, 601 South Kingsley Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90005.

Grants for Environmental Projects. The Captain Planet Foundation supports environmental education projects that take young people out of the classroom and get them involved in saving the Earth. Any K-12 teacher, school, school district, or non-profit organization is eligible to submit a grant proposal. Grants range from $250 to $2,500. There is no application deadline. To receive a copy of the grant guidelines, write to Crissy Sapp, Manager, Captain Planet Foundation, One CNN Center, 10th Floor, South Tower, Atlanta, GA 30303.

Grants for Young People from Do Something. Do Something is a national non-profit organization that provides training, guidance, and grants of up to $500 to young people to help build their communities. Each year's deadlines for grant applications are July 1 and December 1. For a brochure and grant application, contact Do Something, 423 West 55th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10019, (212) 523-1175, **DoSomthng@aol.com**.

Yoshiyama Award. Applications are now available to nominate students for the Yoshiyama Award for Exemplary Service to the Community. This is an annual award given by the Hitachi Foundation recognizing high

school seniors for outstanding community service and leadership. The deadline for nominations is April 1. To receive the nomination material, send a self-addressed mailing label to Yoshiyama Award, P.O. Box 19247, Washington, DC 20037 or use the Hitachi Foundation's Fax on Demand System by calling (202) 457-0588 ext. 551 and following the instructions.

Days of Service

If you are planning a project that needs a lot of volunteers, you might consider holding it on one of the nationally sponsored days of service held each year. They include:

National Youth Service Day is sponsored by Youth Service America. More than 3 million young people participate in community-building service projects across the country.

Days of Caring sponsored by United Ways. These service days kick off fundraising campaigns. Each community sets its own date.

Make a Difference Day is held on the fourth Saturday in October. It's sponsored by the Corporation for National Service in partnership with *USA Weekend* and the Points of Light Foundation.

Also celebrated each year: **Martin Luther King Day of Service** on Martin Luther King's birthday. More than 1 million people take part.

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